



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 14 August 1967



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DAILY BRIEF
14 AUGUST 1967

LATE ITEM

Congo

A demonstration against the Belgian Embassy in Kinshasa began this morning. A crowd of about 1,000, in an ugly mood, broke into the chancery building. Ambassador McBride has reports of attacks on Europeans elsewhere in Kinshasa, and a few rocks were thrown at our embassy.

Both Mobutu and Bomboko knew of the planned demonstration last night, but claimed preparations had gone too far for it to be called off. Bomboko also hinted that the Congo is considering breaking diplomatic relations with Belgium "to satisfy public opinion."

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1. South Vietnam

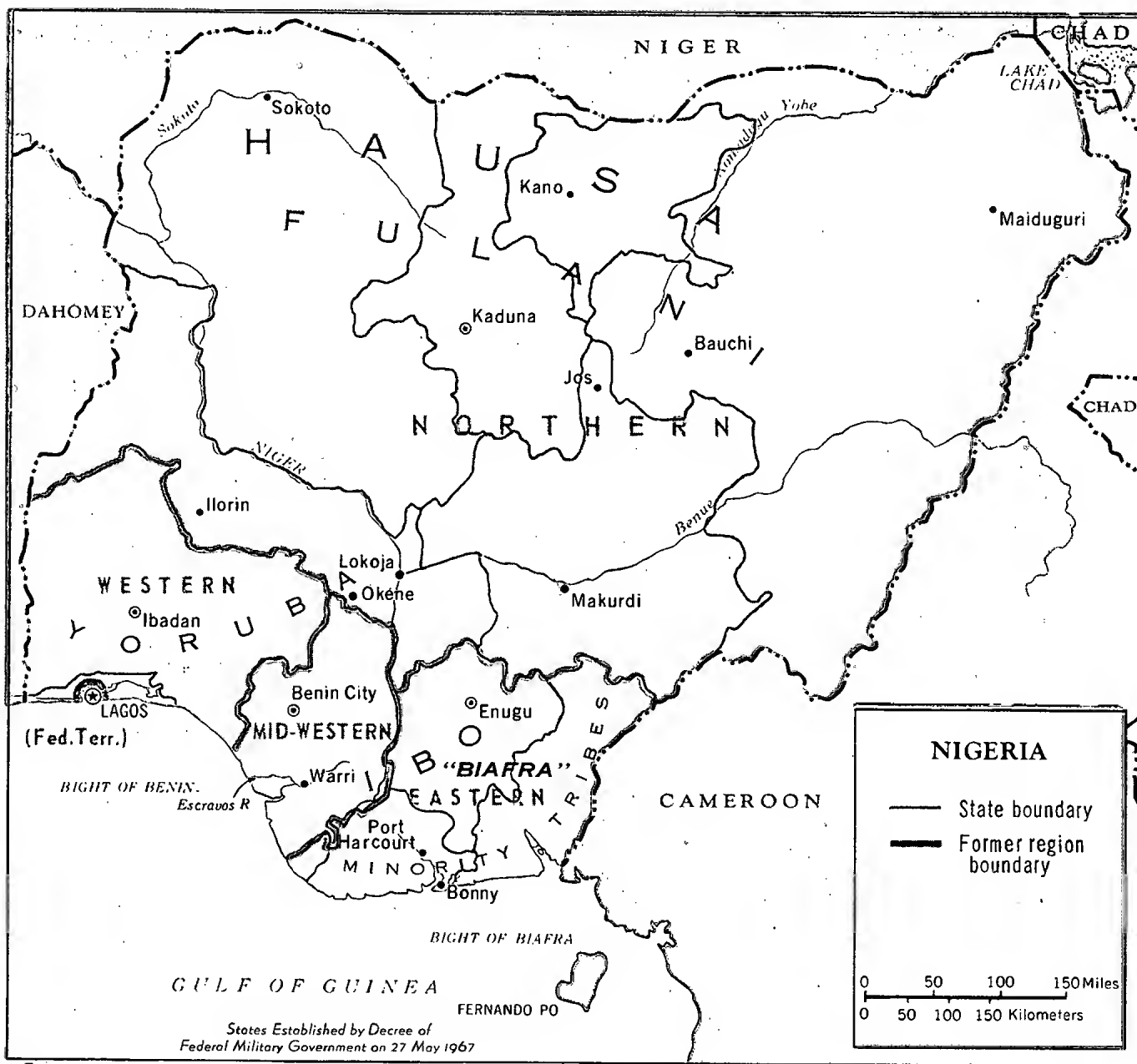
The civilian presidential candidates decided to resume the campaign only after receiving a letter from the special commissioner for administration which met most of their demands. The government agreed to order local police chiefs to provide security for the candidates and preserve order at meetings, and to place an Air Vietnam plane at the candidates' disposal. Also, local government authorities have been told to cooperate with local campaign committees to provide facilities for public speaking appearances if these are requested.

Various groups are beginning to disclose their attitudes toward the elections. The militant Buddhists plan to announce today their intention to boycott unless Thieu and Ky resign their government posts. The Catholic Church intends to remain neutral, but will urge citizens to vote. The Vietnamese Confederation of Labor will support the Thieu-Ky ticket.

2. Communist China

Violence continues to increase throughout the country while Maoist leaders are showing new concern over the loyalty of military men. 50X1

There are signs from Peking that the Maoists are trying to shift to milder tactics. Red Guards besieging the compound where Liu Shao-chi is being held have dispersed, and last Friday a scheduled mass meeting to denounce Chen Yi apparently did not materialize. 50X1



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3. Nigeria

Biafran forces and their Mid-Western allies are now pushing into Northern Nigeria. Most towns in their path--including the key river city of Lokoja--appear to be defended only by police units. Federal reinforcements have not yet arrived in the area.

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4. Sino-Soviet Relations

The Soviet ship Svirsk has been permitted to leave the Chinese port where it was harassed over the weekend by mobs of Red Guards. In his brisk protest to the Chinese, Kosygin made the point that the Chinese behavior could jeopardize Sino-Soviet trade agreements, virtually the only remaining tie between the two countries with any practical significance. Moscow will probably continue to exploit the incident for propaganda purposes, but is unlikely to let it lead to any formal break in relations.

5. Congo

Our embassy in Kinshasa, assessing the effects of the mercenary rebellion, believes it has so far not shaken Mobutu's internal position or caused much short-term economic distress. It has, however, had devastating effects on the morale of the Europeans in the country, scared off desperately needed foreign investors, and lowered the Congo in the eyes of other African nations.

The mercenaries, still holed up in Bukavu, appear to have no immediate plans for leaving.

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